

**Instructions:**

Group leaders, take some time before your gathering to look over these questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you pick 3-5 questions to discuss that pertain to your group's unique style and needs.



**Series description:**

In Scripture, Paul prays that the church in Ephesus would be rooted and grounded in love so that they may be filled with the fullness of God. What does it mean to be rooted and grounded? How can we continue to bear fruit for the Kingdom that will last? And what are the marks of a fruitful community of faith?

Join us for this new teaching series as we consider the values of Revolution Church and find inspiration to be rooted together in love toward a future with Christ.

*\*\*This is a great opportunity for newcomers to learn more about our church and mission! Invite a friend and we will see you there!*

**Message description:**

Serving the least of these is clearly defined in Matthew 25:

*"I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was homeless and you gave me a room, I was shivering and you gave me clothes, I was sick and you stopped to visit, I was in prison and you came to me."* And yet, learning to live like Jesus, seeing every person in need as a neighbor, seeing Jesus in the eyes of our neighbors, and befriending the marginalized and neglected takes courage. This kind of love takes risk to cross borders and boundaries and go to people and places that others might avoid. **Our core value of RELEASE (creating measurable and sustainable change) runs all the way through who we are and what we do as a church, motivated by the love and example of Christ to be a witness.** Through our mission partners and works of service, mercy, and justice, we are joining God in the revolution of transforming lives by releasing God's love into the world. The revolution is just beginning...

**Key Scriptures**

*Acts 17:24-29*

*Matthew 25:31-45*

## Questions Related to This Week's Message:

1. In her teaching, Rachel shared the following quotation from Larry Stoess in Think Red:  
"As we watch Jesus engage with in relationships with the poor, we get a glimpse at how he moves in rhythm with God's heart. Friendship with the poor and the forgotten comes natural to Jesus, as natural as breathing. You never see him patronize or exploit people. He never forces his agenda on them. Compassion and love are always his motivation, never pity. When you listen in on the conversations Jesus has with people, you get a strong sense that he loves everyone he meets; and yet, he seems to have a special affinity with those who are poor and marginalized."
  - What do you find most inspiring about Jesus' example of service?
  - How are you/we befriending the poor?
2. How does your perspective of service change when you consider that we are formed by the Spirit to be representatives of Christ in every space we enter? What do you think it means that disciples of Christ will announce the revolution and not be "representatives of empires" (Dr. Willie Jennings)?
3. *We see mission not as an activity but a way of life. It isn't another layer that adds more to what we have to do, but is the way of living out God's revolutionary love into the world.* How are you doing with this way of life? Does service feel like an added layer right now? Why or why not? How can we help this shift for you?
4. Are we as a church taking enough risks with our release outreach?

## Going Deeper, from companion guide for *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations* by Robert Schnase

### Risk-Taking Mission & Service

Vibrant, fruitful, growing congregations practice Risk-Taking Mission & Service. Risk-Taking Mission & Service includes the projects, the efforts and the work people do to make a positive difference in the lives of others for the purposes of Christ, whether or not they will ever be part of the community of faith. This Practice is one of the fundamental activities of church life that is so critical that failure to practice it in some form results in a deterioration of the church's vitality and ability to make disciples of Jesus Christ. A church without generous and willing service by its members can never practice Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship, Intentional Faith Development or Extravagant Generosity since these depend upon the time, leadership, effort, prayers, sweat and tears of members and friends of the church.

"Risk-Taking" refers to the service we offer that stretches us out of our comfort zone and has us engaging people and offering ourselves to ministries that we would never have done if not for our desire to follow Christ. Risk-Taking refers to the service Risk-taking steps into great uncertainty, a higher possibility of discomfort, resistance, or sacrifice. It pushes us beyond the circle of relationships that routinely define our church commitments. It changes the lives of the people who are served as well as the lives of those who serve.

### Churches that cultivate the Practice of Risk-Taking Service & Mission...

- Not only raise money to support overseas, international, and community work, they also organize teams, solicit and train volunteers, and send people to work directly in hands-on, face-to-face ministries.
- Offer service/mission opportunities with gradations of involvement and differing levels of complexity appropriate to the talents, skills and interests of a variety of people.
- Not only offer their own projects and programs organized by their own members, but also collaborate with other churches, other denominations, civic organizations, social agencies and non-profit groups; weaving the church's social concern into the networks of community service.

- Actively invite and welcome newcomers, visitors, and the unchurched to help them in making a difference in the lives of others.
- Have a responsibility to bear witness to wider social change by advocating for policies that improve the lives and conditions of those who struggle at the margins of society.

**Read the description and insights regarding risk-taking mission and service.**

- **When is the last time you served outside of your comfort zone? What did you learn? How did you grow?**
- **How has a mission initiative or outreach ministry changed our church? Or shaped your own life?**
- **What type of learning opportunity would you like to attend at Revolution if it were offered?**
- **What is the most unexpected place to which your faith in Christ has taken you in order to make a difference in someone's life?**